

would have known there is always one reason, and it is always the same.

Henry Palmerston, who never acted on impulse, and never did a foolish thing, suddenly made up his mind. He drew a chair close to the sofa on which she was sitting.

"There is only one thing to be done, Leila. . . . You must marry me this afternoon. There will be no question of means after that. The privilege of paying will then be my right."

"This afternoon! she repeated. But, but, I ought to be in the home by half-past six."

"And so you shall be. I must get a special licence. I shall telephone to the House at once."

This is a quaint proceeding to say the least of it, but Henry, being nothing if not resourceful, carries it through, and at the appointed hour she finds herself in the home with Henry's signet ring upon her third finger.

The greater portion of the book is occupied in describing life in a surgical home, and the authoress has an irritating habit of speaking of the nurses by their surnames without prefix, "Sister" Lister alone being paid this respect.

This marriage in haste at first does not promise well, and in her adieux to Sister Lister she admits—

"To-night the world appals me."

"There's so much in it," Sister Lister agreed.

"Don't ask me whether I have decided to go to Grosvenor Square or to Soham; people ask me nothing else all day long, and the truth of the matter is I don't want to go to either."

Sister Lister dropped her eyes again. "Don't be afraid. I am not going to ask; but if I were you I should go to Soham. . . . With many people marriage is only a half-way house. I couldn't live in a half-way house myself; I'd rather be homeless."

"I can't live there either." It was quite unnecessary to explain that the mansion of Soham was the house to which she referred.

Later, "she thought Soham was beautiful, but, like Grosvenor Square, it chilled her. It was a magnificent house, but it did not seem to be anyone's home."

She tells her maid: "It is so dreadfully quiet, Terry. I can hear everything." She could hear her own heart beating, and longed with a pang of home-sickness for the roar of London that used to silence all these lesser sounds. Twice during the night Terry came in softly to see if she were sleeping.

"Terry," she whispered, "I want to go back; the world hurts me."

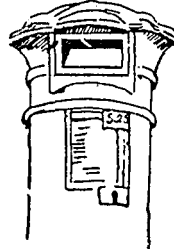
"Well, we can't go back to-night," Terry said, "and things always hurt less in the morning."

The second time Terry came her face was buried in the embroidered pillow. She was weeping her heart out against the Palmerston monogram.

But though it all comes right in the end we think the moral is, that the nursing home was dear at the price, and the common or garden hospital would have saved a great deal of trouble. But then this book would never have been written.

H. H.

Letters to the Editor.



Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not IN ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

OUR GUINEA PRIZE.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—Very many thanks for BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING announcing my gain of the "Guinea Puzzle Prize," which came as a delightful surprise to me.

I am, yours very truly,

E. SHAREMAN.

The Infirmary, Wandsworth.

THE NEW MIDWIVES' BILL.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—May I, in the interests of tens of thousands of poor women, ask your readers' attention for the new Midwives' Bill, which the House of Lords has just passed, and which the House of Commons has now to consider?

When the police find a man urgently needing medical aid, owing to some accident or another, or even to his own misconduct, they summon a doctor to attend to him. That doctor's fee is paid as a matter of course out of the police rate, and the man is not made liable to repay the amount.

When a woman has made the customary provision for her confinement by engaging a certified midwife, Parliament intervenes to compel that midwife, should any unforeseen dangerous emergency arise, to have a doctor sent for. Parliament made no provision as to that doctor's fee, but it is being paid, as a matter of fact, in Manchester and Liverpool, Cardiff, and St. Helens, by the Town Council out of the Public Health Rate; and all Rural and Urban District Councils have equal powers to make the payment. Sometimes the Board of Guardians will make the payment, and then the Relieving Officer is sent to make inquiries, though the Poor Law authority has no legal power to recover the amount.

Now the Bill which the House of Lords passed proposes by Clause 17 to put it upon the Board of Guardians, instead of the Town Council, in all cases to pay the doctor's fee out of the Poor Rate, although the payment has admittedly nothing to do with parochial relief, and is expressly declared to be not parochial relief. At the same time the unfortunate woman and her husband are, for the first time, to be made liable to repay whatever fee the Board of Guardians, under Local Government Board regulations, chooses to pay the doctor.

Here are two separate and distinct hardships to be inflicted on thousands of thrifty and hard-working women and their families, just in their hour of need. The first hardship is the importation into the matter of the machinery of the Poor Law, in-

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